

---

HOUSE BILL 2329

---

State of Washington

60th Legislature

2007 Regular Session

By Representatives Kretz, Blake, Orcutt, Hailey, Warnick, Newhouse, McCune and Ahern

Read first time 02/21/2007. Referred to Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources.

1 AN ACT Relating to increasing hunting opportunities during legal  
2 holidays; amending RCW 77.12.150; and creating a new section.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that many of the  
5 state's hunters are either employed on most nonholiday weekdays or  
6 attend school full time. This situation limits the ability of many to  
7 participate in the hunting opportunities made available by the fish and  
8 wildlife commission on nonholiday weekdays.

9 (2) The legislature further finds that the legal holidays  
10 recognized by state law provides many of these individuals with  
11 discretionary time that could be used for hunting, if there were legal  
12 seasons corresponding with the holidays. For instance, the hardship of  
13 missing work to participate in a modern firearm deer season scheduled  
14 for the week before Thanksgiving would be alleviated if the season was  
15 moved to the week containing the holiday.

16 (3) The legislature further finds that the fish and wildlife  
17 commission should try, whenever possible, to make hunting opportunities  
18 available on holiday weekends. Timing hunting seasons with holidays

1 would, in many cases, take minimal effort, yet would allow the working  
2 men and women of Washington an opportunity to pursue their sport  
3 without having to miss time from their employment.

4 **Sec. 2.** RCW 77.12.150 and 2003 c 385 s 2 are each amended to read  
5 as follows:

6 (1) The commission shall, when practical, establish general and  
7 special hunting seasons, and other hunting opportunities, to coincide  
8 with legal holidays recognized in RCW 1.16.050.

9 (2) By emergency rule only, and in accordance with criteria  
10 established by the commission, the director may close or shorten a  
11 season for game animals, game birds, or game fish, and after a season  
12 has been closed or shortened, may reopen it and reestablish bag limits  
13 on game animals, game birds, or game fish during that season. The  
14 director shall advise the commission of the adoption of emergency  
15 rules. A copy of an emergency rule, certified as a true copy by the  
16 director or by a person authorized in writing by the director to make  
17 the certification, is admissible in court as prima facie evidence of  
18 the adoption and validity of the rule.

19 ((+2)) (3)(a) If the director finds that game animals have  
20 increased in numbers in an area of the state so that they are damaging  
21 public or private property or over-utilizing their habitat, the  
22 commission may establish a special hunting season and designate the  
23 time, area, and manner of taking and the number and sex of the animals  
24 that may be killed or possessed by a licensed hunter. The director  
25 shall include notice of the special season in the rules establishing  
26 open seasons.

27 (b) When the department receives six complaints concerning damage  
28 to commercial agricultural and horticultural crop production by  
29 wildlife from the owner or tenant of real property, or from several  
30 owners or tenants in a locale, the commission shall conduct a special  
31 hunt or special hunts or take remedial action to reduce the potential  
32 for the damage, and shall authorize either one or two permits per  
33 hunter. Each complaint must be confirmed by qualified department  
34 staff, or their designee.

35 (c) The director shall determine by random selection the identity  
36 of hunters who may hunt within the area of the special hunt and shall  
37 determine the conditions and requirements of the selection process.

1 Within this process, the department must maintain a list of all persons  
2 holding valid wildlife hunting licenses, arranged by county of  
3 residence, who may hunt deer or elk that are causing damage to crops.  
4 The department must update the list annually and utilize the list when  
5 contacting persons to assist in controlling game damage to crops. The  
6 department must make all reasonable efforts to contact individuals  
7 residing within the county where the hunting of deer or elk will occur  
8 before contacting a person who is not a resident of that county. The  
9 department must randomize the names of people on the list in order to  
10 provide a fair distribution of the hunting opportunities. Hunters who  
11 participate in hunts under this section must report any kills to the  
12 department. The department must include a summary of the wildlife  
13 harvested in these hunts in the annual game management reports it makes  
14 available to the public.

--- END ---